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January 4, 1988

## NATIONAL SPACE POLICY Q&amp;As

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## 1. How long was the policy in preparation?

- The Interagency Group for Space (IG-Space) held its first meeting on July 31, 1987. The Senior Interagency Group for Space (SIG-Space) held its final policy review meeting on December 17, 1987. The remaining time until the President signed the policy was devoted to final administrative preparation of the directive, and legal review.

## 2. What agencies participated in preparing the new policy directive?

- SIG-Space member agencies include the National Security Council staff (chair); the Departments of State, Defense, Commerce, and Transportation; representatives of the Director of Central Intelligence, Organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Office of Management and Budget, and the Office of Science and Technology Policy. In addition, the Treasury Department participated throughout the review process.

## 3. Why did it take so long?

- This was a comprehensive review of all aspects of national space policy--the first since 1982.

## 4. The trade press reported that the interagency process encountered numerous serious arguments among the agencies. Will you comment?

- As in all democratic processes, strong and sometimes differing opinions are expressed--often vigorously. The important thing is that any differences that existed were resolved in an orderly process that thoroughly examined all the opinions advanced.

## 5. Did some of the issues go to the President for resolution?

- I will not comment on specific issues considered by the SIG-Space. Suffice it to say that a structured process exists to obtain decisions within the interagency process when consensus cannot be obtained.

## 6. Was the reestablishment of the National Space Council considered during the policy review? If so, why was the idea rejected?

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- The idea was surfaced during deliberations, but it did not enjoy much support. The reason was simple. While reorganization is always a tempting solution to political frustration, the promises accompanying such reorganizations are often illusory in practice. Replacing one interagency process (SIG-Space) with another (a National Space Council) accomplishes little. The President has established an effective interagency process not only for space, but for all important U.S. matters. To single space out for different treatment would invite other areas to demand their own, tailored decision-making process--a sure recipe for bureaucratic gridlock. SIG-Space works as an effective forum for senior level consideration of space issues, and if agreement cannot be obtained there, an orderly process exists to elevate decisions to the President, if necessary. The very fact that SIG-Space was able to produce this revised national space policy is a testament to its effectiveness.

7. Were the reports of the President's National Commission on Space (Paine Report) and Sally Ride's report on "Leadership and America's Future in Space" used in the preparation of this revised policy?

- Both of these reports were examined and considered in the preparation of this policy.

8. What else was used?

- IG-Space representatives used a wide variety of source documentation including previous National Security Decision Directives relating to space, policies developed by the Economic Policy Council's Commercial Space Working Group, testimony before Congressional committees, as well as numerous editorials and policy papers on the topic of America's future in space. However, another key source of information was comparisons that were accomplished of U.S. space activities versus those of other countries in three areas: civil, commercial, and national security.

9. Can you comment on the conclusions of these comparisons?

- In general, these studies indicate that popular impressions of "lost U.S. leadership in space" notwithstanding, claims that the U.S. is 10-20 years behind the Soviets are without merit. In fact, by most important quantifiable measures (data accuracy, timeliness, quality, and quantity), U.S. space systems are the world's finest and will remain so for the foreseeable future. Most comparisons that appear in the trade and popular press highlight the fact that U.S. manned and unmanned launch systems suffered disastrous accidents that essentially grounded most U.S. space systems in 1986 and earlier this year. While these statements are true, they rarely go on to say that the U.S. has made both technical and

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policy changes to prevent a reoccurrence of these launch problems. Moreover, the successful Titan launches at both east and west coasts late last year have signalled that all U.S. expendable launch vehicles are once again operational, and we're confident the Shuttle will be back flying later this year.

However, the studies do reveal that the U.S. is not preeminent in every aspect and discipline of space activity. Our space policy acknowledges that space leadership in an increasingly competitive international environment does not demand this universal preeminence; rather it states that the U.S. objective is leadership in those areas critical to important U.S. goals. We believe this is the proper U.S. role.

10. What are the implications of these assessments?  
(NASA/DOD/Commerce)

11. In exactly which areas are the Soviets ahead? (DOD/NASA)

12. Is NASA's budget adequate to ensure U.S. leadership?  
(NASA/OMB)

13. Would you explain what the establishment of this human exploration goal means? Is this a commitment to fly people to Mars or return to the moon? What is the dollar commitment associated with the Pathfinder technology program announced in the policy? (NASA/OMB)

14. When would a manned planetary decision be made? (NASA/OMB)

15. Might the U.S. and the Soviets cooperate in a future manned mission? (State/NASA/OMB/DOD/Commerce)

16. Why has the military space budget been rising faster than NASA's? (DOD/NASA/OMB)

17. Doesn't this risk military dominance over civil space activities? (DOD/NASA/OMB)

18. What restrictions remain on government regulation of civil earth remote sensing? (Commerce/DCI/State/DOD)

19. What about the Soviet lead in heavy lift launch systems; doesn't this provide them with a significant advantage?  
(DOD/NASA)

20. What role do U.S. commercial space ventures play in this new policy? (Commerce/Transportation/NASA/DOD/OMB)

21. What does the policy have to say about commercial launch

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vehicles? (Transportation/DOD/NASA

23. What initiatives might emerge out of this further  
refirement of the policy affecting commercialization of space?  
(Commerce/Transportation/NASA/OMB

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**NATIONAL SPACE POLICY HIGHLIGHTS**

-- Space Leadership is reiterated as a fundamental national objective in areas defined as key to achieving our national security, scientific, economic and foreign policy goals;

-- A long range goal is established to expand human presence and activity beyond Earth orbit into the solar system. A technology program (Pathfinder) under the direction of NASA will begin the development of technologies necessary to enable a Presidential decision on a future focused program of manned exploration;

-- Agency roles and responsibilities are codified and specific goals are established for the civil space sector; those for other sectors are updated;

-- A separate, non-governmental, commercial space sector is recognized and encouraged by stating that Government actions shall not preclude or deter the continuing development of this sector. New guidelines are established to limit unnecessary Government competition with the private sector, and ensure Government agencies are reliable customers for commercial space goods and services;

-- An "assured access to space" launch policy for national security missions is clearly enunciated, and the survivability and endurance of critical national security space functions is stressed;

-- A comprehensive study to explore the means whereby alternate methods of encouraging private capital resources to be enlisted to support the nation's space goals will be conducted;

-- Finally, policies for civil remote sensing of the Earth are established to encourage the development of U.S. commercial systems competitive with or superior to foreign operated civil or commercial systems.

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① ASAT paragraph  
w. D & D, etc.

② Comments on security by Thw.

③ Q & A responses by Mon. 11 Jan.